



S I R,

THE Favour which You, and some of the Proprietors did me when you gave me Leave to Discourse with You, on the Subject of the Company's Settling a Faactory at *Jamaica*, has encourag'd me to digest my Thoughts, and to reduce them into writing for your Perusal. Not that I imagine myself capable of informing you of any Thing material in a Matter of Trade merely, which you are all perfectly Masters of, but with intent to reconcile the Company to His Majesty's Island of *Jamaica* for their principal Faactory, which as I am fully persuaded would be for the Advantage of both, I should be very glad to see them United.

I am the rather induc'd to undertake this, because it is so much the Interest of *Britain*, that both should Flourish, and because it seems so very easy and obvious that this is the Way to it; and yet I find many Gentlemen who have not had any Experience in the *West Indies* themselves, have very few distinct Notions about them, and have therefore been the easier led into a very strong Bias against it. And tho' there are many Persons who are much better able than myself to inform the Company, none have given themselves the Trouble to do it, at least with

the same View, and, as I may presume to say, with the same Impartiality.

However willing, Sir, you have been, and some few others, to entertain this Proposition at all Times, you have agreed It was to little purpose to advance it till very lately ; The Torrent of Power rush'd violently another Way, sufficient to bear down all that oppos'd it, and was not to be stemm'd but by changing its Course, and bringing it back into its former Channel.

But to come to the Matter in Hand ; All that I have seen publish'd upon this Subject, like most other Propositions at that Time, were apparently Calculated for some private End ; The *South Sea Company* (however sensible they may now be of having been ill used by their own Parents) were not so sensible of it a little while ago. They were generally considered, and consider'd themselves as a Creature of the Court, and submitted a long Time to its Directions. The Advocates for the Court, or rather those in the Secret for carrying on the Design of the Managers of the *Affiento Contract*, (for indeed they were the greatest Enemies to the Court,) thought it necessary to the proving what Advantages would accrew to the Company and to the Nation thereby, to magnify those which had been enjoy'd by *Jamaica* during the War, [as if, *Britain* at that Time had no Concern in it] under the ungrateful Denomination not only of a Secret, but a fraudulent and unlawful Trade, and therefore an Inference was drawn [how reasonable will appear immediately] that the Island of *Jamaica* was for the future to be avoided as a Rock in the Sea, and the *Jamaica* Merchants to be regarded as no better than Robbers and Pyrates in Trade, who ought to have been punish'd by the Governor of *Jamaica*.

And yet this fraudulent and unlawful Trade as it has been lately called by them [I speak of it before
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the Treaty] had no less than an Act of Parliament pass'd 6th of Queen *Anne*, for its encouragement, Entituled *An Act for the Encouragement of the Trade to America*: In which Act the manner of Trade carry'd on at that Time with the *Spaniards* by the *Jamaica* Merchants, was so particularly described, that the Parliament could not be impos'd upon in it.

Besides Her late Majesty had been likewise pleased to Countenance that Trade in a very particular manner, by Her Instructions to the Governor of *Jamaica*, and to send Blank Passes from King *Charles*, then K. of *Spain*, to be given and employed as Occasion should require, for the more effectual carrying it on; How insolent was it to the Queen, as well as unjust to Her Subjects, after this to Treat them as Pyrates in Trade, and Threaten them with Punishment for doing that which Her Majesty and Her Parliament had thought fit to encourage them to do?

But this was lately so much forgot, and so little was any Encouragement to this Colony any more thought of, which had, during the War, afforded *Great Britain* (for itself had a very small Share in it) the Opportunity of Trade, which return'd Annually to it above 100,000 *l.* Sterling in Bullion, besides its own Manufacture, and which must be allow'd to have been a considerable Help towards carrying on the War, and to whose Situation was likewise owing all the Successes of the *British* Arms in that Part of *America*; that one Action of Sir *Charles Wager's* in destroying the ~~*French*~~ Galleons, having been in its Consequence equal to a glorious Campaign: And yet, I say, so little Regard was lately had to an Island so considerable, as if there was no likelihood of ever having any further Use or Occasion for it; that it was so shamefully neglected by some, whose Business and Duty it was to have protected and encourag'd it, and so scandalously traduced by others, that

that it would undoubtedly have been brought in a very little Time into evident Danger of falling into the Hands of *France*, upon any new Rupture, unpitied and unregretted.

Tho' this would in all Probability have been the Consequence, had Matters gone on upon the Foot they then were; I am loath to be so uncharitable as to believe that to have been the Design of it, tho' some don't scruple to believe and say it. For my Part, I think the whole Mystery was unfolded in the Examination before the House of Lords in the Business of Captain *Johnson*, if a principal Factory was to have been Establish'd at *Jamaica*, such a private and clandestine Trade as appear'd there to be intended to be carry'd on to the Prejudice of the Company, could not so safely have been carry'd on by that or any other Way, as directly to the Coast of *New Spain*, nor have been so secretly manag'd as by the sole Employment of *Jews*, *Papists* and *Spaniards*: You, Sir, who had so considerable a Share in detecting that projected Piece of Fraud, and thereby render'd very great Service to the Nation as well as the Company, in putting a stop to such proceedings, will, I am perswaded, have had little Difficulty to discern through the whole Scheme, of avoiding the Isle of *Jamaica* as a Rock, and to determine who really design'd to be the Robbers and Plunderers in that Trade.

But I assure myself this Danger to *Jamaica* is over; and as the Company are already, by the Wisdom and Justice of the present Administration, restor'd to a perfect Liberty of consulting its own Advantage, without Dependence on any private Dictator, so I make no Question but the like Regard will now be had to all Parts of His Majesty's Dominions, and the Interest and Safety of all His Subjects.

The Case fairly stated, was never between the

the Trade of the *South-Sea* Company and that of *Jamaica*; which imaginary Competition was artfully given out to blind the Company and prejudice them both, by creating Jealousies between them; but the Question with the *South-Sea* Company, was, Whether they could carry on their Trade, especially the *Affiento* Contract, any other Way, so well as by the Way of *Jamaica*?

What is therefore now to be done, is no more than to convince the *South-Sea* Company, that it will be most beneficial for them to settle their principal Factory there, to determine them to do it; and indeed, unless such extraordinary Methods had been made use of to frighten them from it, it would appear altogether unnecessary, and a Work of Supererrogation to any Person, the least experienc'd in the Trade of that Part of the World, to use many Arguments about it; but the plainer that will now be made appear, the grosser will appear, the Abuses of those who had so successfully prejudic'd the Company against it.

The only thing I don't remember to have heard the *Jamaica* Merchants accused of, has been want of Understanding how to carry on this Trade whilst they had it, in the most beneficial Manner: Their Enemies have never reproach'd them with not carrying their Slaves directly from the Coast of *Africa* to that of *New Spain* (which they might have done notwithstanding the War, as well as the *French*, had they thought it their Interest) nor with making use of any other prejudicial Methods, but have allow'd them to have been Gainers by their Trade, however Collusive they have reckon'd it; and tho' it has been carefully avoided by the Projectors of the *Affiento* Contract (as appears with no good Design to the Company) that any Rule or Information should be had or taken from any of those Traders; yet it is now presum'd, that Mist being taken from before their Eyes, they will
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Examine for themselves, and Determine upon the like Method if more advantageous, whatever other manner of Trade may have been procur'd for them by Treaty at their own Election.

When I have nam'd the Situation of *Jamaica*, I am sensible you will readily comprehend all the force of my Argument. It seems altogether needless to mention its Latitude or Longitude, or those of *St. Martha*, *Carthagen*, *Porto-bello*, *Le Vere Crux* and the *Havana*, with the rest of *Cuba* all surrounding it: It will be needless likewise, to mention the Trade Winds or the Navigation in those Seas. You, Sir, know the Map, and all those Things much better than I do, and will as readily make the Observation, That there is no one Place whatsoever, if One had ones Choice of the Whole, that lies so Commodious for all the Trading-parts of the *Spanish West-Indies*, from the Entrance at the *Charibbe-Islands*, to the Gulf of *Mexico*, as *Jamaica* does; methinks, if *Jamaica* Port belong'd to the *Spaniards*, it might still be a Question, If it were not the Company's Advantage to trust them with their principal Factory, by reason of the Conveniency it has in its Situation above any other Place. But I own, whilst such an Island, so conveniently situated for an *English* Company has belong'd to the Crown of *Great Britain*, it has seem'd a Paradox to me, to find them seeking after Settlements in *Spanish* Dominions; I mean, such Settlements, as were intended by the Contract; such as making Plantations, building Ware-houses, laying in Stores, &c.

But as Commodious as *Jamaica* lies for carrying on the Trade with the *Spaniards*, its Situation never has been, nor ever can be, of any Advantage to it, but from the concurrent Advantage and Assistance of *Britain*.

During the Time *Jamaica* is said to have had this Trade, it was the Merchants of *London* and *Bristol*, who

who sent their Ships to *Africa* with the Manufacture of *Britain*, with which they purchas'd Slaves, and sent them to *Jamaica*; out of which proper Assortments were made for the Coast of *New Spain*, and the Sloops of *Jamaica* were employ'd as the fittest and cheapest Vessels for the Importation of them to the *Spaniards*; whilst they made their Voyages, the rest of the Slaves were sold to the Planters, and the Merchant Ships were taking in their Freight of the Manufacture of the Island, and by the return of the Sloops, were ready to sail back with their Returns, Part in Bullion, and Part in Sugar, Indigo, Pimento, Cotton, or other Produce of the Island to *Britain*, where the Profit of the Voyage center'd.

The chief Advantages which accru'd to *Jamaica* from this Method of Trade, was, the Employment of their People, the bringing Plenty of Negroes, and all kind of Provisions and Stores from *Britain*, *Ireland*, and the *Northern* Plantations to their Market. The keeping up the Price of their Commodities, and making Freight reasonable, by the Number of Shipping it brought to the Island: All which Advantages it is conceiv'd would remain to them, if the *South-Sea-Company* continued to make the same Use of them. And in return of which the Island will most certainly afford the Company reciprocal Advantages.

Experience [perhaps the best Argument in Trade] has confirm'd the Method practis'd by the *Jamaica* Merchants to be the best, if not the only One for furnishing the *Spaniards* with Negroes to any Advantage; The demands of the *Spaniards* are generally for compleat Slaves, Men and Women in their Prime of Life, or Boys and Girls, all clean Limb'd, Healthy, without Blemish or Defect, and such Men or Women are what they usually call *Piezas de India*, and tho' Two Slaves or more by reason of their Age or Size may be reckon'd as one piece of *India*, with respect to the Duty, yet it is very rare

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that they will Buy any Slave the left defective or disfigur'd, tho' it be but in the tip of an Ear.

Now as Ships on the Coast of *Africa* must Slave as they can, and do usually bring from thence *Negroes* of all sorts, whereof hardly ever above Two Thirds are fit for the *Spaniards*. It becomes necessary upon this account to touch first at some other Place to make the Assortment proper for the *Spaniards*, and to secure a Market for the Remainder. Besides, Ships from the Coast of *Guinea* frequently arrive in a very sickly Condition in *America*, and sometimes with the *Small Pox* amongst them, in which Case nothing can be more for the Advantage of the Slaves as well as their Owners, than to shift them into fresh Vessels, from those that are Distemper'd, and so to send them with a fresh supply of Water and Provisions to the Coast of *New Spain*, where a contagious Sickness among the Slaves (especially if they should be obliged to continue any Time aboard after their Arrival) might ruin the whole Voyage.

And this would probably as often happen as Ships arrived with the *Small Pox* aboard. It being required by the 21st Article of the Contract, "That whenever
" the Ships of the said *Affientists* shall Arrive in the
" Ports of the *Indies* with their Cargoes of *Negroes*,
" The Captains thereof shall be obliged to Certify
" that there is not any contagious Distemper a-
" mongst them, without which they shall not be
" admitted.

But besides it is not likely they will always find a very quick Market. The *Spaniards* will wait to lower the Price; which the *Jamaica* Merchants always experienc'd, Meeting with great Delays, on some Pretence or other as often as they carry'd their Slaves without a previous demand by their Correspondents; Upon which Occasions of a previous Demand, it has ever been that they have made the best Voyages, and Sold their Cargoes entire, and been immediately dispatch'd.

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But I think Sir, all these and other Inconveniencies were to be remedy'd by Privileges yielded to the Company, such as building Store-Houses, laying in of Stores of all kinds, Landing their Negroes in some Cafes, and settling Plantations for their better Refreshment and Subsistence; and this by a notable Contrivance was to be done by the Slaves themselves, as a moderate Exercise only to keep them in Health, until they should be disposed of.

Now supposing these Privileges to afford the Company all the real Conveniencies for their Shipping and Trade that *Jamaica* could afford them, I will venture to say they would cost them Ten times as much, every body knows the dearness of Labour, and the scarcity as well as dearness of Provisions upon the Coast of *New Spain*, which will concern the Factories on account of their own Living as well as their Slaves; the same Expence of Store-Houses and all necessary Accommodations for their Ships and Slaves must be made in every Factory as in any one: There being no Two Ports, except *Carthagena* and *Portobel*, which lie near so commodious for the Assistance of one another as *Jamaica* does for them all.

And as to the settling Plantations with Slaves that are to be always at Market, and which the *Spaniards* are expected to buy for Servants in their Houses, which is the chief Use they make of them, That is altogether chimerical, The Beauty and Skin of the Slave is much regarded by the *Spaniards*, and the mark of a Stripe upon the Back, would not only spoil a *Piece de India*, but would often prevent the Sale; and it must be a very moderate Exercise indeed, which they will be prevailed with to do in the Field without a moderate use of Correction, besides, the sending them alone to a Soil proper for Planting in Seasonable Weather for it, and exposing them to the Damps and Rains would certainly occasion them abundance of Sickness and destroy many, but this

upon many other Accounts was so wild an Imagination, that I believe it was only intended to amuse those who were altogether unacquainted with the *West Indies*, and the Nature and Management of Slaves.

I think there is very little to be said for Planting at all, in which Case the Company must necessarily do like other Planters. They must stock their Plantations with proper Slaves, whom they must Cloath and Encourage to build Houses for themselves and Families, and fix them therein, and run the hazards of Sicknes &c. which all Planters do, and which are always greatest in New Settlements, and with unseason'd Negroes.

If this were to be done among the *Spaniards*, there would probably be little Land to be found at any reasonable Distance from the Ports, which was worth any Bodies while to Plant, They must go into the Neighbouring Mountains to look for it; and when they had done, they would find it had been very much their cheapest Way to have sent to *Jamaica* to have Bought those very Provisions, rather than Planted them.

But whoever will consider the 24th, and 35th Articles of the Contract, and compare them together, will easily comprehend the Favour that is intended the Company by this Privilege of Settling Plantations; The Duties are agreed to be due from the Day of landing the Slaves in any of the *Spanish* Ports, and to be Paid though the Negroes Dye before they are Sold, except only, if they are dangerously ill, then indeed they shall be put ashore for their Health, and must out-live the 15th Day, after which Time if they dye, the Duty is to be Paid. And I am very much afraid if the Slaves are brought directly from *Guinea*, those Plantations will only serve to invite them to Land under pretence of Recovery, in order to fix the Duty, but will be
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of more Use for a Burying Place for them, than for their Refreshment or Preservation.

I believe I may say there is scarcely One Ship arrives from *Guinea* with Three, Four, or Five Hundred Negroes aboard, whereof there is not from Ten to Thirty, and sometimes twice as many, which are not worth 5 *l.* a piece when they arrive, and yet in all probability may not only out-live Fifteen Days, but with great Care and Nursing most of them may recover; I confess I can't tell by the Contract what the Duty is to be that such Slaves are to Pay, or how many of them are to go to a *Piece de India*; I think it very unreasonable they should Pay any, and yet I see no Way to avoid it, but by going first to *Jamaica*.

But if Ships are to come down directly from the Coast of *Guinea* to the several Ports of *New Spain*, what are to be done with the refuse of the Cargoes, such Negroes as the *Spaniards* will not meddle with? It may be answered, that the remainder may be sent from *Carthagena* to *Jamaica*, as well as from *Jamaica* to *Carthagena*, which is agreed they may, [those Two Ports lying pretty opposite, and the Navigation betwixt them as to the advantage, or rather the disadvantage of Winds and Currents, setting into the Gulph, being much the same either way] But then the Negroes must not be Landed, for if they are, its plain by the 24th Article the Duty must be paid tho' they are not Sold; and the like Expedient cannot be found from any other *Spanish* Port; a foul large Ship may be as long in getting up from *Portobello*, as in coming from *Guinea*, and from the *Havana* or *La Vera Cruz*, there is hardly any returning for them to Windward at all, and if they could, the Remainder of the Negroes would not pay the Charge of the Navigation.

It's true, The *Portuguese* and the *French* who have both had the *Affiento*, carry'd it on with their great Ships directly from *Guinea* to the Coast of *New Spain*, but good part of that Time *Mexico* was very ill supply'd, and it is agreed on all Hands the *Affientists* lost considerably by it; and it looks as if the latter had found by experience that it was owing in some Measure to their Method of Trade, since they had endeavour'd of late to try another, by a Settlement they made use of for that purpose at the Island of *St. Thomas*.

During part of the Reigns of King *James*, and King *William*, *Don Nicholas Porcio*, a *Spaniard* undertook the *Affiento*. He manag'd it by an Agent, who had liberty (and I suppose it was not thought a very great Favour done him) to reside at *Jamaica*; [a preference the *Spaniards* would not have given to it, had they not been convinc'd of its Advantages over all other Parts of the *Indies*] this Agent was *Don Castillo*, afterwards Knighted by King *William*; and he having proper Factors at the several Ports on the *Spanish* Coast to give him Advice from Time to Time of the Demands of Slaves, and the Contracts made for them, had no more to do than to purchase them of the *English* Merchants as they came to Market at *Jamaica*, and the price agreed for with the *English* was generally paid in Silver or Gold upon the delivery of the Slaves at the particular Ports to which they were consign'd.

It must be granted, *Don Porcio* succeeded no better as to His particular Gain by the *Affiento* than the *French* and *Portuguese*; all have been Loosers by it; This is confest upon the *English* Contract; [tho' there is now a much better prospect for the *English* Company, if they themselves don't take wrong Measures] However, I never heard but the *Spaniards* were well supply'd with Slaves during *Don Porcio's* Con-

Contract, and *England* then had their *Bullion* for its Manufacture.

One would think there should be little difficulty to prevail with an *English* Company to take all possible precautions to avoid such Measures as they find Reason to believe were the Occasion of their Predecessors, former Assentists, miscarriages, and which appears to have been in nothing plainer than in having trusted the *Spaniards* too much, and been too much in their power.

I have heard there was a great Arrear due to *Don Porcio* and others concern'd with him at the Expiration of His Contract, or at least when He had done with it, which was never afterwards paid; They were Subjects of *Spain*, and tho' they had much the same Priviledges granted them in the *Indies* that other Assentists have had, they were still in their Sovereign's Power, and could have no redress but from him; This ruin'd them and Sir *James Castillo*, and with whom several *English* Merchants likewise suffered, and who possibly might have found means of redress, if all the Care had been taken of them which might have been expected from the progress of the *British* Arms; But I really do not know certainly if this Opportunity was lost for want of a proper Application, or by a neglect of it when made.

The *Portuguese* Company settled amongst them, and thereby gave them an Opportunity of seizing their Effects to a great Value on some pretence of breach of Articles, and by all the Sollicitations they have been able to make at the Court of *Spain* have never receiv'd Satisfaction.

The *French* Company pursued the same Measures, and tho' they had pretensions to better Usage, have found [excepting the Seizure] little better Success.

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And tho' it were now to be hop'd that an *English* Company under the Protection of his present Majesty, who will undoubtedly revive and maintain the Honour of the Nation, and Security of its Commerce, will not be in danger of ill Treatment. Yet who knows what may happen upon a sudden Rupture, if they, like the *Portuguese*, put themselves in their Power, to be liable to be surpriz'd? Their Contract must in such Case be suspended, and they are not to forget that in Case of a War, they may fare the worse for being thought Here-ticks.

But I have heard it taken for granted, (as most other Things in relation to this Affair, which have a prejudicial Consequence to the Company, have been) that, which Way soever the *Negroes* are carry'd, there will be a Necessity of Trust. For my Part, I cannot agree to this; there is no Obligation to it by the Contract: The Duties are taken care of, and to be paid in the Court of *Spain*, whether the Company get any thing from their Mines or not; I confess, there is one Way to make it necessary, and that is, by carrying the *Negroes* directly to them; if the Company does not do that, I think, they need not Trust, unless they find an Advantage in it by the Price.

The *Spaniards* formerly found ready Money for the Price of the Slaves to the *English* in the Time of *Don Porcio's* Contract, and the Credit that was given, was given by those Affiantists and their Agents: They have likewise paid ready Money to the *Jamaica* Merchants during the War, and their Correspondents used to Advise them when the Money and Plate arriv'd from *Lima*, &c. before they expected a supply of Slaves, they cannot but be suppos'd as able to do it in Time of Peace. And whatever may have been pretended by those whose Designs have apparently been to favour the *Spaniards* more than
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English, (notwithstanding it was the *English* Company it seems, who were design'd should have paid them $7\frac{1}{2}$ per Cent. for extraordinary Services). The *Spaniards* will most certainly find ready Money now, or what is equivalent to it, if they are kept to their Contract (as I hope they now will of not being supply'd with Slaves by any other Nation.

What has been observ'd, Sir, seems to me to point out the most easy, safe, and frugal Method of carrying on the *Affiento* Contract to the best Advantage of *Britain*, the Company, and *Jamaica*.

Suppose then, all were reduc'd to this short Scheme,

That the *South-Sea* Company settle their principal Factory at *Jamaica*, not exceeding six Persons.

That they be entrusted with a Capital Stock sufficient to employ two or three Sloops constantly to the several Ports of *New Spain*: These may be bought or hir'd, as the Company shall think fit.

That two Factors only (which is thought will be found upon Consideration sufficient) be sent to reside at such of the *Spanish* Ports as shall be thought requisite, and they to give Advice of the Demands of the *Spaniards* from Time to Time, and of the Prices offer'd or contracted for.

That a Super-cargo out of the Factory at *Jamaica*, be sent on Board the Sloops every Voyage, and be a Check upon the Factors on the Coast.

The Company to send all their Slaves to *Jamaica*, there to be sorted proper for the *Spaniards*, and never to be sent, but according to such particular Demands, and Advice of there being Money, Plate, Gold, or other valuable Exchange ready to purchase them.

The Remainder of the Cargoes, to be sold to the Planters.

If there be any Apprehension of Danger from Pirates, or otherwise, Application may be made to the Government for a Frigate to accompany the Sloops, which may easily be order'd, there being generally two Frigates in Time of Peace upon the *Jamaica* Station.

The Trade to *Africa* being no otherwise necessary to the Company, than to enable them to perform their Contract, they may pursue that more or less, as they find it necessary, or find it answer. Tho' they should decline it themselves, their Encouragement to the Market at *Jamaica*, would not fail to bring thirty or forty Sail of *Guinea* Ships every Year to that Island, and their Factory would be sure of having their Choice of Slaves at reasonable and certain Prices, because they would buy with ready Money, which others are not always able to do.

Voyages to *Carthage* may be made in Sloops in little more than a Fortnight; in about three Weeks to *Portabello*; to the *Havana* in about a Month; and to *Lavera Cruz* in little more: Each Sloop will carry a Hundred and fifty *Negroes*, and make eight or ten Voyages in a Year: And in this manner two or three at most will deliver the whole Number of *Negroes* contracted for in the North Seas, or a greater number if needful at the Times and Places the *Spaniards* shall require them.

After the first returns from the Coast, the Plate and Money which was the produce of the preceding Voyage, may be immediately and so successively return'd to *Britain*, with a Freight of Plantation Commodities, as often as the Company send their own Ships.

As to the *Negroes* which are to be furnish'd at *Buenos-Ayres*; Thither indeed it seems necessary for the Company to send Ships directly where there must be a Factory to receive them, having no Colony of their own Country from whence they can supply them.

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But I believe if the Method now propos'd for the rest, be compared with any other, and fairly examined, it will not only appear more safe and profitable, but much less Chargeable in the execution.

This will certainly raise the price of Slaves with the *Spaniards*, who must agree to a reasonable Profit before they can expect them, whereas the contrary Method would often occasion a Glut, and being at their Market and only theirs, they would in good measure be able to set the Price.

By this means Vessels from *Ireland* and the Northern Plantations, will be encourag'd to bring like Quantities of Provisions and Stores for Shipping to *Jamaica* as usual : Of which, and particularly Flower and Pork (if not Contraband) the Company will have a constant Demand for their own Use, and to dispose of *to the Spaniards with their Slaves, which they will never fail to take off at a very great Advantage.*

By this Means, the Colony of *Jamaica* will be again encourag'd and strengthen'd ; which will be a strengthening of His Majesty's Power and Influence in those Parts, and which is the real Security of the Company : Many Inhabitants will thereby be employ'd there, which would otherwise be the Employment of *Spaniards* ; a great part of that Money which would be spent by the Company's settling Factories, and laying in Stores and Provisions for their Ships and Slaves in Spanish Dominions, will be saved to the Company ; and what is spent, will be spent amongst His Majesty's own Subjects : If the Company turn Planters, it will be in a British Plantation, and the Navigation and Trade of many other British Plantations will be increas'd ; the Company will be watchful over the Safety and Interest of the Colony of *Jamaica* upon every Alarm or Appearance of Danger, which will be a Security to the Estates and Interests of the Inhabitants of the Island, as well as

their own, whilst so great a Treasure as may at any one Time be in the Hands of their Factors, will be in His Majesty's own Dominions, and not upon the precarious Foot of being in the Power of a one Foreign Nation under the Influence of another in Case of any Rupture, with either of them, or any pretended Breach of the Spanish Laws.

I am persuaded every honest *Britain* will wish these Advantages to *Jamaica* rather than to *Spain*, and yet I cannot help saying, That all the pretended Privileges granted to the Company by the Contract, supposing it to be carry'd on upon the Scheme of avoiding *Jamaica* as a Rock, have an apparent View of carrying all such Advantages to the Spanish Settlements, and leaving a British Colony surrounded by two Powerful Nations, lately their united Enemies (and of whom *Jamaica* must be always jealous) under such visible Discouragements, as either to fall a Sacrifice to one of them, or to dwindle by Degrees to Decay and Destruction.

You will observe, Sir, that I have hitherto avoided taking any Notice of the extraordinary Advantages given to the Company in the Affiento Contract, by the Liberty of sending a Ship of five Hundred Tunn every Year with dry Goods to the Coast of *Spain*. The manner of sending and disposing of those Goods seems so particularly prescrib'd by the Treaty, that so long as that remains upon the Foot it now stands, they can be imported to the *Spaniard* in the *West-Indies* in no other manner.

But however, the Company are become very sensible of the Inconveniencies which must attend the locking up their Goods in the King of *Spain's* Ware-Houses, till the Time of an uncertain Fair, with many other Particulars which they have taken prudent Methods to have redress'd, and which Articles

cles will undoubtedly receive, by the Influence of his present Majesty, a favourable Explication.

And yet it may not be improper to acquaint you upon this Head, that the Method the *Jamaica* Merchants took for disposal of their dry Goods, was to sell them together with the Slaves; and it has been very difficult for them to dispose of any Woollen Goods otherwise, by reason the *French* have continually stock'd the *Spaniards* with Woollens to that degree by way of the *South-Seas*, that instead of any Demand for such Goods for *Lima*, and the rest of the *South-Seas*, by the way of *Portobel* and *Panama*, from whence they had formerly all their Supply, they have of late Years actually sent them from thence into the *North-Seas*.

Unless that Passage is stop'd, it is impossible any Trade for such Commodities can be advantageous in the *North-Seas*.

The Time was, when a Treaty might have been obtain'd for the *British* to have been the only Foreign Nation allowed to Trade with the *Spanish West-Indies*, which was an Article propos'd and agreed to at the Treaty of *Gertruydenbergh*, and might as well, and with more Reason have been obtain'd afterwards; this would have been a great and real Acquisition to the *British* Trade; what is done as yet, as to Woollen Goods, is of little or no Advantage.

But to return to what I design'd to confine myself to wit a Principal Factory at *Jamaica* for the disposal of Slaves.

To which I remember there were some Objections made, and which you will expect should be answer'd.

The most Material one, I think, was the Duty of Twenty Shillings *per Head*, which has been laid by Act of Assembly in *Jamaica* upon the Export of Slaves, and been apply'd to the Extraordinary Occasions

Occasions of the Government there during the War; this was alledg'd to be Unreasonable for the Company to pay for so great a Number of Slaves as they should import to *Jamaica*, only as a Ware-House.

I cannot be positive whether this Duty has ever been continued in Time of Peace, and if not, the Objection falls.

For my Part, I confess it seems to me very impolitic for any Country to lay a Duty upon the Export of a Foreign Commodity, which is a manifest Discouragement to the Importation of it; whereas on the contrary, there is a Draw-back allow'd upon the Exportation of almost all such Species of Commodities in all well regulated Countries.

I have been very credibly inform'd, that *Barbadoes* had formerly a pretty considerable Trade for Negroes, with some of the *Spanish* Windward Settlements, till without considering the Consequences, and imagining that it would lessen the Price for the Planters use, by discouraging the Exportation, they laid such a Duty upon the Export of Slaves from their Island: But this gave Occasion to the Exporters to raise their Price upon the *Spaniards*, and so discourag'd the Importation, that it prov'd the Loss of that Trade, and of which they became afterwards very sensible, but were never able to recover it.

The Assemblies of *Jamaica* will certainly consider how much it is the Interest of that Island to invite the Company to it by all the Indulgences they can allow them, and exempt them from any Burthens which may reasonably discourage them.

Tho' the Consequences have not yet been the same to them as to *Barbadoes*, they owe it to their Situation above the other; if it should remove the Company from them, their Case would then be little different.

But

But on the other side, if the Exigencies of the King's Government there, should at any time require the raising such Summs as used to be raised by that Duty, and no other Expedient could be found by more proper Funds, (as 'tis probable there would) yet I hope whilst the Company enjoy'd all the benefit of Export to themselves. The Payment of a moderate Duty towards the Support of that Government, which it would then equally concern them to support, would not be a sufficient matter of Difference to prevent their settling in a Colony, which will, as I have shew'd, amply repay them in the Expense it will otherwise save them, and in the Conveniencies it will afford them.

Another Objection was made, That this would be a Factory Extraordinary, and that as it has been thought necessary to have Factors in all the Principal Ports upon the *Spanish* Coast, and at the *Havana*, and none can be omitted on Account of this, this would encrease the Charge of the Company.

I think this is sufficiently answer'd already, nor shou'd I have now stated it as an Objection, but to consider a little more fully, how reasonable it appears to lessen the Company's Charge at every other Factory.

I have propos'd Two Persons instead of Six in each Factory, who having nothing to do but to agree for, receive, and deliver the Negroes sent him by the Principal at *Jamaica*, and to ship the Returns, I think, will be altogether sufficient.

Nor can I see the Reason why the Company should go further than *Portobel* with their Factory for the Supply of the *South-Seas*; it's true, *Portobel* is an unhealthy Place, but so is all the *West-Indies* for *Europeans*; and if the Company chuse *Panama* for their Factory, for that Reason, there must one or two notwithstanding reside at *Portobel*, or else they must agree at *Panama* for the Delivery of their
Slaves

Slaves to some *Spaniards* at *Portobel*, who shall be appointed by the Contractors for the Receipt of them. There is no doubt but the Price of Slaves in those Parts increase as they Travel into the *South-Seas*. The *Spaniards* will give more for Slaves at *Panama*, than they will at *Portobel*, and more at *Lima* than at *Panama*; but then the Seller must deliver them at those Places at the advanc'd Rates, and it is therefore very immaterial where the Contract is made, the Place of Delivery being what will determine the Price; and I cannot but be of Opinion, it will be best for the Company to leave the *Spaniards* to the travelling their own Slaves up their own Country, who are best acquainted with the Method of it, and can certainly do it cheapest; but more especially on account of the Duty payable at their first Landing, whatever Accidents happen afterwards, and to content themselves with the Profit of them upon the Delivery at *Portobel*, and run no further Risque, either of transporting their Slaves over Land, or bringing back their Money, in which likewise they will find there is Danger, the *Spaniards* having been many times intercepted by Pyrates about the Entrance of the River *Chagre*.

Much less can I think it the Company's Advantage to embark on any Navigation in the *South-Seas*; they are to have but Six Persons, at most, of *English* in their own Factory, and the Privilege of hiring *Spaniards*, and *Spanish* Vessels are amongst those Advantages which are certain to the *Spaniards*, with very little Appearance of being such to the Company.

There have always *Spanish* Factors resided at *Portobel*, for the Business of *Panama* and the *South-Seas*, and the Company will not fail of Persons who will content themselves with residing there likewise; and if they come to consider what they will have to do
when

when the Notions of Store Houses, Plantations, &c. are laid aside, I believe they will conclude Two there, and the like at *Carthagena*, *La Vera Cruz*, and the *Havana*, with their Principal Factory at *Jamaica* and Supercargo's only from thence to the Ports of the Windward Coast, upon Advice of Letters, will very sufficiently answer their Occasions.

A third Objection which was said to have had great Stress laid upon it, was that by the Company's settling there, it would give an Opportunity to the *Jamaica* Merchants to continue their private and unlawful Trade, (which I allow it may now very justly be call'd since the Treaty) under Covert of the Company's own Factory, and which was absolutely necessary for the Company to prevent, and therefore it was argued as necessary to settle only among the *Spaniards*.

Tho' I cannot agree to this Conclusion, on the contrary it appears to me to be an Argument rather for than against the Matter in Dispute; yet I must admit, that the Company have had some Reason given them to apprehend from the *Jamaica* Merchants a continuance of their Secret Trade, in prejudice to them, and therefore am not surprized that this Objection should have made a strong Impression upon many Gentlemen concerned in the Direction of the Affairs of the Company.

In a Pamphlet, containing several Letters to a Member of Parliament, entituled, *The Assiento Contract consider'd*, (which seem'd to have been done with honest Design) the Author, I think, has suffer'd his Zeal to transport him too far in his Vindication of the *Jamaica* Trade, as well when he condemns the *Assiento Contract*, as what must necessarily be a losing Contract, and deprive the Nation of those Advantages which accru'd to it by the *Jamaica* Trade, as when he justify'd their Right to continue

tinue their private Trade, notwithstanding the Treaty.

In Pag. 46. he has this Query, "Whether any
 " Stipulation in a Treaty, the Article whereof not
 " particularly confirm'd by Act of Parliament, can
 " restrain the Subject from any Right or Liberty
 " which otherwise he might lawfully claim or en-
 " joy, or put him under any Penalties or Incapa-
 " cities which the Laws of his Country have not
 " done ?

I confess these are Matters above my Capacity ; however, because those Letters were said to be wrote from *Jamaica*, and in a View for its Service ; and because such Pretensions to a Right of Trade seem to be the most reasonable Foundation of the present Objection, I shall endeavour to answer it.

And I think it would be very dishonourable to the Prerogative of the Crown to suppose any disability in it, about regulating a Matter of Trade by Treaty, in any particular whatsoever, not contrary to the Laws of the Land. The Eighth and Ninth Articles of the Treaty of Commerce with *France* were to introduce that which was directly contrary to an Act of Parliament, and therefore needed an Act of Parliament to support what was there stipulated, by Repeal of a former Law, but there were several other Regulations in Trade contained in that as well as all other Treaties ; which were never thought to have Occasion for an Act of Parliament to enjoin the Observance of. And yet will any Body say, They are not therefore to be observ'd. And can it be pretended the *Jamaica* Merchants had a legal Right to such a Trade ; this their best Friends cannot say for them.

This way of Arguing would render all the Treaties of our Princes of little Credit or Consequence, and Foreign Nations would think themselves as little obliged by them, as often as it suited

suited the private Ends of any of their Subjects, however prejudicial to us to neglect them, or act contrary to them.

And tho' that Writer has with a pardonable Warmth for what he has thought the Good of *Jamaica*, drawn all the dismal Consequences he has fear'd as necessary to the Loss of this private Trade, I cannot but so far differ with him, as to think the general Concern and publick Interest of that Colony will be answered by the Company's settling there, however it may prejudice some private Persons.

Those Traders may likewise remember, that the Trade carry'd on by them (tho' the best which the Circumstances of Affairs then permitted) was yet attended with great Hazard, and very often great Losses were sustained by them, in which the Publick likewise suffer'd. The Trade which is now settled is upon a surer Foundation, and promises a more lasting Advantage to *Jamaica*, if the Company settles amongst them.

And I own I am at a Loss to find out how this comes to be an Objection to it. The Company (it must be allowed) have the sole Right of supplying the *Spaniards* with Slaves, according to the *Asiento Contract*, and all other Nations and Persons (not concern'd in the Company, which it is in any body's Power to be) are excluded thereby. This Right is granted by the King of *Spain* to the Crown of *Great Britain*, and by His present Majesty to the *South-Sea Company*, and cannot be questioned by the Subjects of either.

Allowing then the Company to have most Reason to suspect the *Jamaica* Merchants attempting to interfere with them; Which seems the most reasonable way to prevent them? The selling their own Factory in *Jamaica*, who may observe and watch them, and must be inform'd of every Attempt of that Nature; or avoiding that Island, and trusting to the intercepting

all such Traders on the *Spanish* Coast? It must be very obvious to every Body that will judge impartially, that the former is the more probable Method. There is but one Port of Entry at *Jamaica*; the Company's Factors will reside there: It becomes the publick Interest of the Island to discourage all Attempts against the Company's. The Governour is at hand to support them in the Enjoyment of their just Right; whereas when once a Vessel is sail'd from thence, it is not easy to meet with her upon the Coast. That Trade has been famous for being carry'd on there clandestinely; the *Spanish* Governments have never been able to hinder them; and the Temptation will be the same to the *Spaniards* in buying Negroes cheaper by saving the Duty. There are an infinite Number of Creeks upon the Coast, where small Vessels may get it; and it can hardly be expected that *Jamaica* will contribute to the Discovery of their Inhabitants, or hindering them the least in any Trade, when by the Company's avoiding them, they will be reduc'd to the utmost Necessity.

There are but these two Ways the *Jamaica* Merchants can continue their Trade if the Company settles at *Jamaica*; It must either be by sending Negroes aboard the Company's Vessels, which cannot be without the Permission of their Factors, or else in separate Vessels, which cannot be without their Knowledge; so that this Objection can have no Weight but from a Supposition of the Company's being betray'd by their own Factors.

But I was sorry to hear this Objection carry'd further: *Jamaica* was charged with forgetting very much the Interest of their Principals in *Great Britain*; and how punctual soever they might be in their Dealings amongst one another, they were said to have little Regard to the Concerns of those who were absent; and that

that therefore the Company were unwilling to have any thing to do with them.

This is an Objection indeed that highly concerns them, and which in all Likelihood first came from those who have been so industrious to give them an ill Name in order to destroy them, concluding that if they were once well branded, and under an ill Reputation, they could the more easily be avoided as a Rock.

But I believe *Jamaica*, Sir, in this respect is pretty much like the rest of the World; it has been a considerable trading Place, and therefore should know the Value of Credit; at least it is very unreasonable to judge of whole Societies by the Lump in Matters wherein every Individual is to answer for himself; however, I think, I may venture to say this in Vindication of the whole, That it is not possible for the Company to fall into worse Hands in that Island, than those they have lately got out of.

And tho' there may have been particular Instances of Breaches of private Trust (as I suppose there may have been in all Factories abroad and at home) yet I believe that publick Justice has been generally as equally administred there; (I speak of it within the Compass of my own Experience and Observation for eight Years past) and that at least as much care has been taken by the Legislative there for the Security of every principal Adventurer thither, as in any other of His Majesty's Colonies.

But if this be an Objection, Sir, to the Company's settling there, it must be an Objection to the Air of the Place, which in such case I think would be the most unhealthy in the World; for the Company, it is supposed, will choose their own Factors, which they may do, if they think fit, of Persons who have never been there; and if they believe the Infection catching,

catching, it may then more probably be owing to the Climate, and their Factors may run as great Risques among the *Spaniards*.

It's certain there must be Trust in their Factories, wheresoever they settle them; and, in my humble Opinion, there seems more Likelihood of Discovery of any Breach of it, and of Redress in *Jamaica*, than in *Spain*.

I don't recollect any other particular Objection that was made, and begin to fear I have already detain'd you too long on so plain an Argument. Wherefore, I conclude with my Thanks to your self, and those other Gentlemen with whom I had the Honour to be in Company, for this Opportunity of shewing them my Respects, and of attempting a small Piece of Service to my Country. If I shall be so happy as to have contributed any thing to that, I shall have only further to desire the Favour of being esteem'd,

S I R,

Yours, &c.

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